

The Special/Study Meeting of the Troy City Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Chamberlain at 7:30 p.m. on January 7, 2003, in the Council Chambers of the Troy City Hall.

1. ROLL CALL

Present:

Gary Chamberlain
Dennis A. Kramer
Lawrence Littman
Cindy Pennington
James H. Starr
Walter Storrs (arrived 7:35 p.m.)
Mark J. Vleck
David T. Waller
Wayne Wright

Also Present:

John Szerlag, City Manager
Mark F. Miller, Planning Director
Brent Savidant, Principal Planner
Susan Lancaster, Assistant City Attorney
Richard Carlisle, Carlisle/Wortman Associates
Kathy Czarnecki, Recording Secretary

2. MINUTES

Resolution

Moved by Starr

Seconded by Littman

RESOLVED to approve the December 3, 2002, Planning Commission Special/Study Meeting minutes as published.

Yeas

Chamberlain
Kramer
Littman
Pennington
Starr
Vleck
Waller

Abstain

Wright

Absent

Storrs (arrived 7:35 p.m.)

MOTION CARRIED

3. PRESENTATION BY / DISCUSSION WITH JOHN SZERLAG, CITY MANAGER

John Szerlag, City Manager, presented the following eight items to the Planning Commission for discussion and/or suggestions and input. Mr. Szerlag noted that it was not necessary for the Commission to take action on any of the items at tonight's meeting.

- (1) *Transfer of authority to Planning Commission to make determinations to the type, size and location of screening elements adjacent to residential areas.*

Mr. Szerlag suggested a transfer of authority to the Planning Commission to determine whether a wall, berm or any screening would be required as well as placement thereof. He noted this would be a functional change as most of the surrounding residents to a proposed development requiring screening attend the Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Szerlag commented that residents would then be aware of any screening decisions.

(Mr. Storrs arrived at 7:35 p.m.)

- (2) *Feasibility and functionality of a shift in the approval process from the administration to the Planning Commission with reference to tree preservation plans.*

Mr. Szerlag asked the Planning Commission to review the tree preservation ordinance and the changes proposed by City staff, and to present City Council with a joint recommendation by the Planning Commission and City management for the adoption of the tree preservation ordinance.

- (3) *Approval of landscape plans by the Planning Commission.*

Mr. Szerlag requested the Planning Commission to consider the review and approval of landscape plans as part of its site plan approval process. He noted that professionals from the Parks and Recreation Department would be available at the first three Planning Commission meetings to offer their expertise, if needed.

- (4) *Reexamination of CR-1 Zoning (or Cluster) Ordinance.*

Mr. Szerlag reported that Council and City management have agreed that a review of CR-1 zoning ordinance text is necessary to determine if enhancements are necessary. Mr. Szerlag asked the Planning Commission for its assistance in reviewing the ordinance, and generation of a joint recommendation from the Planning Commission and City management to City Council with any proposed text amendments.

(5) Uniformity of analysis when reviewing proposed Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).

Mr. Szerlag referred to his memorandum dated December 30, 2002 that was addressed to City management, City Council and the Planning Commission requesting their review relating to the uniformity of analysis for PUDs and infill developments.

(6) Annual presentation to Planning Commission relative to its functions and duties.

Mr. Szerlag suggested an annual presentation to the Planning Commission for the purpose of discussing its role and functions as a Board, indicating it would be most beneficial to new Planning Commission members.

(7) Parking requirements and parking standards.

Mr. Szerlag requested Richard Carlisle to perform an industry standards report and comparative analysis of parking restrictions and requirements in all zoning classifications to determine if City parking standards should be modified. Mr. Szerlag asked that the Planning Commission work in tandem with City management to provide a recommendation to City Council for any proposed modifications.

(8) Cablecasting Planning Commission Special/Study Meetings.

Mr. Szerlag asked the Commission for its opinion with respect to cablecasting their Special/Meetings.

Chairman Chamberlain entertained questions and/or comments from the Commission.

Ms. Pennington commented that the Planning Commission taking over the authority to determine the type, size and location of screening elements adjacent to residential areas is an excellent idea. Ms. Pennington expressed that cablecasting the Commission's Special/Study Meetings would jeopardize the relaxed atmosphere in which feedback, thoughts and ideas are shared.

Mr. Kramer voiced his support in the Commission taking over the authority to make determinations on screening, noting it would facilitate the site plan process. Mr. Kramer requested that language in the tree preservation ordinance be modified to specify the planting of trees at 50' increments, rather than 50' on center. With respect to PUD developments, Mr. Kramer stated that sometimes it becomes a struggle to clarify the ordinance language "better development" and stressed that the wording is not a means to circumvent the ordinance but that the City is truly looking for something better. Mr. Kramer commented he had no concerns with cablecasting Special/Study Meetings; further, that he had no comment on the parking restrictions.

Mr. Starr agreed that the Planning Commission having the authority to make determinations on screening is an excellent idea. With respect to reviewing and revising the tree preservation ordinance, Mr. Starr requested participation and support from the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Starr expressed concurrence with reviewing CR-1 zoning ordinance text and the PUD analysis. Mr. Starr suggested the presentation of duties to Planning Commission members, if any, should be conducted at inception, not annually. Mr. Starr stated the Commission has given a lot of its time to review the parking requirements and restrictions and would hate to see its progress slowed by waiting for further review by City management and Dick Carlisle. Mr. Starr feels strongly that Special/Study Meetings should not be held in the Council Chambers for the purpose of cablecasting. He has no objections to cablecasting the meetings in a room that is conducive to holding a Special/Study Meeting, such as the Lower Level Conference Room.

At this point, Mr. Szerlag confirmed with Mr. Carlisle that it would take less than a month for his office to prepare an analysis on the City's parking requirements and restrictions.

Mr. Waller suggested that the tree preservation ordinance contains language whereby trees must be cataloged prior to tree removal. Mr. Waller expressed his excitement in hearing the words "partnership" and "joint recommendation" with respect to working together with City management on various projects. Mr. Waller stated that he personally feels the City's existing ordinances are from another era and reviewing ordinances in tandem with City management could be the beginning to validity, rationale and resourcefulness in the City ordinances. Mr. Waller suggested a course of action should be in place should there be differences between City management and the Planning Commission and a joint recommendation cannot be determined.

Mr. Wright agreed that giving the Commission authority to determine screening elements is a good idea. Mr. Wright feels that the Council Chambers physically does not lend itself to a Special/Study Meeting.

Mr. Littman stated he has no objection to cablecasting Special/Study Meetings but objects to holding the meeting in the Council Chambers for that purpose. Mr. Littman expressed that because a significant amount of information is available to new planning commission members, citing conferences with special breakout sessions for new members and valuable resources on-line, it is his opinion that annual presentations to the Planning Commission are not necessary. Mr. Littman asked if Council specifically requested the Commission to review the tree preservation ordinance, and that he would hate to see the Commission and City staff embark on a major effort without the clear intent to do so from Council. He further asked that Council pass a resolution or put into writing its request to the Commission to review the tree preservation ordinance.

Mr. Szerlag commented that a memo was sent to Council informing them of tonight's meeting in which he was requesting the Planning Commission to review the tree preservation ordinance and to consider the approval of landscape plans as a part of its site plan approval process.

Mr. Storrs agreed that he would like City Council to indicate their interest in the Commission reviewing the tree preservation ordinance. With respect to cablecasting Special/Study meetings, Mr. Storrs feels the Commission would with time learn to ignore the cameras. Mr. Storrs expressed his concerns about the Planning Commission not being directly involved in engineering matters such as drainage affecting abutting sites. Mr. Szerlag offered to have reviewed any specific site concerns Mr. Storrs would identify. Mr. Storrs requested that the drainage lots abutting the Evanswood Parc Subdivision on Evanswood be reviewed both before and after the new subdivision. Mr. Storrs also wanted to understand why it was acceptable to in effect place the existing residence at 6113 Evanswood "in a hole" due to the filling of the subdivision. Mr. Storrs also requested the pre and post subdivision analysis of drainage relating to the property at 2915 Hill Drive (the Reece property). Mr. Reece reported that prior to the Dequindre Road fronting, subdivision water would collect at the rear of his property and then slowly drain away over the next several dry days but after the subdivision went in, the water was trapped and the area virtually never dried out except in prolonged dry spells.

Mr. Szerlag agreed to have the drainage matter analyzed and a report provided.

Chairman Chamberlain summarized that the Commission does not have a problem with televising its Special/Study Meetings as long as the meetings are not held in this format (i.e., in the Council Chambers). Chairman Chamberlain cited that screen walls, tree preservation and landscape plans are all really one issue and that the Planning Commission wants to take them on. He noted that the Commission currently has a tree preservation sub-committee ready to take on the mission of reviewing the tree preservation ordinance. He clarified that the Commission does not need a letter or recommendation from City Council to proceed with its review of the tree preservation ordinance. Chairman Chamberlain agreed to review the CR-1 zoning for enhancements, and further agreed that the PUD analysis is a very good idea. Chairman Chamberlain said that Mr. Littman covered his sentiments fairly well with respect to the suggested annual presentation to Planning Commission members. He feels the members can avail themselves to the resources already available through conferences, publications, etc. Chairman Chamberlain stated that the Commission has worked very hard on its review and proposed changes to the City parking requirements and said he does not want to see that effort slowed down. Chairman Chamberlain asked for confirmation that the public hearing on the proposed changes to the off street parking provisions is scheduled in February.

Mr. Miller stated that a February public hearing has not been scheduled.

Chairman Chamberlain continues by saying that the Commission works very hard and spends a lot of hours to get nowhere. He says that City management continues to throw up roadblocks. Chairman Chamberlain stated that the Commission has already had staff and the Planning Director look at the proposed parking requirement changes that Mr. Szerlag is now suggesting that Mr. Carlisle prepare a report. Chairman Chamberlain does not want to see the Commission's effort stopped. He said the Commission has been told that staff is no longer available to work with the Commission

on matters that the Commission has already spent months working on. Chairman Chamberlain stated that he knows staff works for Mr. Szerlag but requested that, at the same time, the Commission would like staff's help. He cited that the Commission reviewed changes to the language in the Special Use ordinance and staff has been told to cease working on that matter. Chairman Chamberlain said that a partnership is necessary between the Planning Commission and City management and it is not happening. He said if City management wants that partnership, then the Commission needs City management's help and the assistance of Mark Miller and his staff.

Chairman Chamberlain asked for an informal vote on cablecasting Planning Commission Special/Study Meetings.

The Commission agreed to cablecasting Special/Study Meetings in the Lower Level Conference Room or such other auspicious meeting room, but not to hold Special/Study Meetings in the Council Chambers for the purpose of cablecasting.

Mr. Littman asked the Assistant City Attorney for an explanation as to the Commission's authority in setting a public hearing.

Ms. Lancaster stated there is nothing in the State statute addressing the mechanism of setting public hearings. She said it is the responsibility of the Planning Director to confirm that everything is in order prior to setting up a public hearing. She confirmed that public hearings for petitioner requests and ordinance changes are set according to the Bylaws.

Mr. Szerlag expressed that City management does not have a comfort level with the data as presented for the proposed changes to the parking requirements and standards. He asked the Commission's serious consideration to allow time for Mr. Carlisle to provide a report prior to holding any public hearing, noting consent to set a public hearing should the Commission choose to go forward without the report.

Chairman Chamberlain responded that in the whole process of the Special/Study Meeting, it's been one hurdle after another as to why the Commission should not be doing this. He stated that the Commission is done with hurdles. Chairman Chamberlain said he does not have a problem with Mr. Carlisle looking at this and knows that staff will do something with the report. He stated that the City receives requests from developers to cut back from required parking and add land banked spaces, and that the Commission is trying to reduce the amount of asphalt and wasted green space, citing it all gets back to water problems. Chairman Chamberlain stated that on this specific issue, the Commission keeps getting a hurdle from City management. Chairman Chamberlain said he still wants to see a February public hearing scheduled, and that Mr. Carlisle can still do his study. He said if the Commission gets a lot of input from the public, then the Commission will look at the matter again. Chairman Chamberlain continued: "Then we have a process. You are just bringing another person to study this. We have done the studies already. I see it not happening for another year. You will send it off to all the departments for their input. The gut of this thing is very simple -- 20% reductions required for any parking lot

over 40 spaces. That land has to be land banked. Then we fine tune specific places. We did not get into making major changes in other zoning districts. We are also proposing that it can be grandfathered in. We can incorporate Dick's study into the public hearing."

Chairman Chamberlain asked for an informal vote in holding a public hearing on the proposed changes to the City parking requirements.

It was the consensus of the Commission to go forward with the public hearing.

Mr. Szerlag said that he would ask Mr. Carlisle to proceed with the report; and further, direction was given to Mr. Miller to schedule a public hearing. Mr. Szerlag thanked the Commission for the opportunity to meet with them tonight.

Mr. Storrs, Ms. Pennington and Mr. Wright voiced their appreciation in having Mr. Szerlag at the meeting.

Mr. Waller asked that Mr. Szerlag come back with more frequency and to bring Council along with him.

In response to Mr. Starr's concerns relating to the tree preservation ordinance, Mr. Szerlag stated that Ron Hynd, the City's Landscape Analyst, would be available to the Commission for questions and information.

Mr. Szerlag exited the meeting.

The meeting recessed for five minutes to allow the petitioner to set up for a presentation.

The meeting reconvened at 8:40 p.m.

4. PROPOSED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD-3) – Proposed Sterling Corporate Center, North side of Big Beaver, West of I-75, Section 21 – O-S-C

Mr. Miller commented that the Sterling Corporate Center group has made a presentation to City management regarding the PUD proposal. This evening will include an introduction to the proposal.

Mr. Charles DiMaggio, Vice President of Project Management for Burton Katzman Development Company, 30100 Telegraph Road, Suite 366, Bingham Farms, was present. Mr. DiMaggio noted that also present were the architects, John Barker and James Sharba of Hobbs & Black; engineer Jim Butler of PEA Associates; and traffic consultant Lori Swanson of Tetra Tech. Mr. DiMaggio provided a history of the property and confirmed that Sterling Bank is the owner of all of the acreage. Mr. Dimaggio stated that a building of much higher quality is allowed under the PUD ordinance, citing quality materials and superb landscaping.

John Barker, architect for the project, gave a short presentation in relation to the display boards, noting that the architectural firm is delighted to be a part of this endeavor. Mr. Barker stated the site is on the northwest corner of Big Beaver and I-75 and contains 5.9 acres. He said the developer's intention is to create a Class A office building of important magnitude to justify the corner location. Mr. Barker explained that the development proposes a 300,000 square foot, 13-story office building with the opportunity to host a variety of commercial businesses on its first floor, inclusive of Sterling Savings Bank and a potential banquet facility on the 2nd floor. Mr. Barker noted that the front entrance would be designed to provide a distinctive and notable signature to the building. A parking deck with 1,129 spaces is proposed to service the building and will emulate the character of the office building. It was noted the proposed number of parking spaces is short of the City's requirement, but the developer will present an analysis as to reasoning for a reduction in spaces.

Discussion followed. The Commission provided the developer with several comments and suggestions.

It was suggested to present the Commission with clear and specific reasons why this development is justifiable under the PUD ordinance. Further, it was suggested that the developer meet with the Planning Department to become familiar with the Commission's desire to create a gateway entrance to the City of Troy and attempt to integrate this concept into the development. Concerns were expressed with the density of the development, the parking deck in terms of size and creativity for other uses and amenities, and snow removal and water drainage from the roof. Further concerns were expressed with the elevation view from eastbound Big Beaver travelers.

Mr. Miller suggested that a close look be taken at the proposed building material to assure its quality will uphold in the future. Also Mr. Miller said time should be dedicated to the traffic study and suggested that Lori Swanson and John Abraham meet to this respect.

Chairman Chamberlain reminded the Commission that a site visit for this project has been scheduled prior to the next Special/Study Meeting, January 28, at 6:30 p.m.

5. PROPOSED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD-2) – Proposed Rochester Commons P.U.D. (formerly Backbay Village), North side of Big Beaver, East of Rochester Road, Section 23 – R-1E

Mr. Miller stated that this project has taken on a new name of Rochester Commons. He stated that the developer has worked with Mr. Carlisle, the Planning Department and City management to fine-tune the project since the Commission last looked at it. Mr. Miller said the major change is eliminating the main entrance off of Big Beaver and moving it to Urbancrest. Mr. Miller reported the Fire Department has expressed concerns with traffic to the fire station and emergency access driveways, and assured the Commission that the Planning Department is working with the Fire Department to resolve these issues.

The developer, Nick Donofrio of Tadian Development, 2038 W. Big Beaver, Suite 200, Troy, was present.

Mr. Carlisle commented that the central focus of the development is the open space. He complimented the developer on the landscaping and the excellent overall plan in creating a great visual amenity to the City.

Discussion followed. The Commission expressed favorable comments to the developer with respect to the community park and the landscaped screening.

Mr. Donofrio noted that the price range for the condominiums is approximately \$185,000 per unit and that the homes will most likely appeal to buyers in the age range of 25 to 35 years. Mr. Donofrio noted that square footage of the units is approximately 1,150 to 1,200 square feet and that each unit has a one-car garage.

Mr. Miller stated the City's intent is to hold a public informational meeting for residents prior to holding a public hearing.

Chairman Chamberlain encouraged the developer to meet with the Planning Department with respect to providing the City with the appropriate PUD documentation.

6. HEIGHT LIMITS FOR AMATEUR RADIO ANTENNA (ZOTA #180)

Mr. Miller reported that the proposed zoning text amendments relating to amateur radio antennas will be placed on the February 4th Special/Study Meeting agenda and that a public hearing will be scheduled in March.

7. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REPORT

- D.D.A.
- Shareholders

Chairman Chamberlain announced that due to the lateness of the evening, the Downtown Development Authority Report would be held over to the next Special/Study Meeting.

8. BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS REPORT

Chairman Chamberlain announced that due to the lateness of the evening, the Board of Zoning Appeals Report would be held over to the next Special/Study Meeting.

9. ORDINANCE REVISION DISCUSSION – OFF STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS (ZOTA #198)

A short discussion followed with respect to the appropriate language for the grandfather clause to be incorporated in the proposed text amendment for off-street parking requirements. It was agreed that a reference to Ordinance 23 is not necessary and

that Ms. Lancaster and Mr. Miller will draft the appropriate legal language prior to the public hearing.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Chairman Chamberlain announced that Jordan Keoleian, former Planning Commission student representative, received a clean bill of health from the University of Michigan Hospital, and also that Jordan attributed his low grade point average (3.0) to his late start in the semester.

Mr. Miller reported that a new student representative was appointed at the last Council meeting.

Chairman Chamberlain gave an update on the proposed Planning Commission officers for the upcoming year: Littman as Chair; Storrs as Vice Chair; Vleck as BZA representative; and Kramer as Alternate BZA representative.

Chairman Chamberlain stated that the Bylaws and meeting dates are discussion items on the next agenda. He suggested a possible modification to the Bylaws to allow the Commission to set public hearings.

Mr. Kramer noted he read a recent written commentary signed by the *Troy Citizens United* stating their reasons for not supporting the civic center development.

Ms. Pennington commented she is happy with her decision to remain on the Commission.

Mr. Storrs announced that topics to be discussed at the next Troy League of Women Voters meeting on January 16 are (1) water drainage and (2) linear parks.

Mr. Miller announced he believes the City Engineer and representatives from the Drain Commission will be attending this meeting, and that he will forward any further information on this meeting to the Commission.

Chairman Chamberlain requested Mr. Miller to advise the Commission of locations/addresses to check out for PUDs. He also mentioned two articles of interest published in the American Planning Association's Planning Journal relating to strip malls and shopping plazas.

Mr. Miller responded that he would again send out information on the American Planning Association website.

Mr. Carlisle noted that the APA website provides links to other planning related websites throughout the country.

ADJOURN

The Special/Study Meeting of the Planning Commission was adjourned at 10:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark F. Miller AICP/PCP
Planning Director

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